



THE CITY OF GUNNISON RECREATION DEPARTMENT'S SPRING 2016 SIX MONTH REPORT

A lot has taken place since November of 2015. Fall programs concluded. Winter programs ran their course, and spring programs started a few weeks ago. The Jorgensen Event Center's indoor rink saw its seventh season come to an end. Cranor Hill opened and closed prematurely for the first time that we can recall due to a lack of snow, and the Denver Broncos won the Super Bowl. Here is a look at some of the other highlights from the last six months.

Throughout November and into December our second session of fall programs are in full swing. Rock climbing, gymnastics, senior fitness, pickleball, tae-kwon-do, FUNducation, volleyball, and other fall programs enjoyed strong participation numbers. On Thanksgiving we had our annual Turkey Bowl with four local die hard teams competing in the flag football mini tournament. In early December our fall programs end and we gear up for a busy winter season that starts after the holiday season. We also conclude the year with our annual Rudolph Roundup/Breakfast with Santa event where we bake pancakes, families enjoy some arts and crafts and kids get their pictures taken with Santa. The biggest thing that took place in December was the opening of Cranor Hill. It is always a challenge to fully staff Cranor, as our hours of operations limit potential employees. Thankfully this year we were able to get all of the shifts covered with some great employees and incredible volunteers. Cranor continues to be one of the little jewels in this community that make Gunnison so unique.

We started the year on a bit of a down note with bad news that our Recreation Coordinator had a set back with her heart condition and hasn't been able to make it into the office since leaving for vacation in mid December. But our staff picked up the slack and we forged ahead with a full slate of winter programs packed with participants. More kids participated in ice skating lessons this winter than they had in the previous ten years. Our winter basketball league for 4th – 6th graders had enough kids in it to run an in-house league which is something that we have been striving for. In fact, almost all of our winter offerings had enough participants to run each program. Rock climbing, gymnastics, tae-kwon-do, senior fitness, pickleball, and swimming lessons are some of the programs that we offer year round here at the Community Center. Throughout the winter we offer season specific programs such as the aforementioned ice skating lessons, as well as cross country skiing.

We continued with our winter programs throughout February. We also had a few cool events take place. One of which was the Denver Nuggets Skills Challenge sectional competition. Local winners from Leadville, Buena Vista, Montrose, Delta, Olathe, and Gunnison met here at the Community Center to compete for the right to move onto the state competition at the Pepsi Center. The second cool event that took place in February was the O Be Joyful ski races at Cranor Hill. We hosted this event on President's Day as kids are out of school and most parents have the day off. It was a beautiful day and dozens of local kids competed in the modified slalom, and downhill races and some were brave enough to compete in the distance jumping event and the free style air competition.

In March we closed Cranor Hill down due to a lack of snow to ski on. We also lose Pac Man Pond in early March, and our outdoor rink shortly thereafter. Winter adult leagues and all of the youth hockey leagues come to an end and we shut the ice rink down after the annual Brent Carlson Memorial hockey tournament. Our spring programs start right after spring break and we have been slammed with huge soccer

numbers (145 participants this spring), as well as a lacrosse program that seems to be skyrocketing with 94 kids in the second year of the program. Other programs that are a staple of our department continue to have strong numbers (50 kids in the first session of spring gymnastics) though we did have a dip in rock climbing this spring. On the Saturday before Easter we hosted our annual Eggquatics Easter Egg Hunt in the aquatics center. This different kind of egg hunt is always a hit with local families.

As we slide into April in a lion's fashion we get into soccer games, lacrosse tournaments, as well as pickleball tournaments. We hosted our second pickleball tournament over April 2nd and 3rd. We had 130 registrants – though some of those 130 played on Saturday (men's and women's doubles) as well as Sunday (mixed doubles). The pickleball tournament takes place in the gym at the Community Center as well as the WSCU Field House. Folks from as far as Cheyenne, Wyoming came to the tournament and we received lots of compliments about the facilities here in Gunnison, and the staff that administered the tournament. Throughout April we will continue with our spring programs and work on our summer programs that are right around the corner.

The last six months has been extremely busy for our department. Being down a full time staff member for a prolonged period of time has increased the workload of every one of our staff members. We look forward to the busiest time of year, and all of the challenges that come with summer. Hopefully we will be able to take those challenges on with a full team.

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